novacon
P2R

NOVACON TWENTY *FRIDAY 9th NOVEMBER TO SUNDAY 11th NOVEMBER*

GUEST OF HONOUR DR. *JACK COHEN*

EXCELSIOR HOTEL BIRMINGHAM

Overflow Hotel Wheatsheaf Hotel, Coventry Road, Birmingham

Room Rates Single Room £27.50 per night
Double/Twin £22.00 per person per night
(The rate includes full English breakfast and VAT, no hidden extras)

Chairman: Bernie Evans

Commitee: Al Johnstone, Steve and Alice Lawson, Nick Mills, Richard Standage.

Staff: *Creche*, Vicky Evans. *Bookroom*, Anne Page. *Artshow* Bill McCabe.

Membership Rates.

£15.00 per person Postal memberships by Monday 25th September.

Advertising Rates.

Progress Reports: £28.00 per page. £14.00 half page. £7.00 quarter page.

Programme book: £36.00 per page. £18.00 half page. £9.00 quarter page. (£1 per qtr. page discount for payment in advance).

Send camera ready copy to :
Alice Lawson, 379 Myrtle Road, Sheffield, S2 3HQ. (Telephone: 0742 728639)

Advertising & Copy Deadlines.

Third Progress Report: 15th September 1990
Programme Book: 22nd September 1990

Book Room Rates.

£15.00 per table for the weekend.
Dealers must be members of the convention.

Convention Enquiries.

Bernie Evans, 121 Cape Hill, Smethwick, Warley, West Midlands, B66 4SH.
(Telephone 021 558 0997, evenings/weekends)

PROGRAMME BIT - BY AL JOHNSTON

Have we got a programme for you? Have we got a programme for you? Well, I think I was right the first time, as it's definitely shaping up.

Apart from Jack Cohen, what I can promise is Chaos:- as one of our serious bits organised(?) by Ian Stewart. There will also be a tour of the Outer Planets, courtesy of Colin Harris and his Voyager slides. Colin worked with the Imaging Science Team, so this will be well worth seeing.

On a lighter note, the 60th anniversary of British Fandom will be celebrated in real style, the film programme has a decidedly Gothic slant, there are some potentially interesting panels, and a mass participation quiz game is in the offing (*not to be confused with Vernon's GCSE quiz, see below for details about that...Ed*). All this, plus all that you normally expect from a Novacon. Be there!

THE QUIZ - BY VERNON BROWN

With Novacon fast approaching, now is the time to start thinking of sitting your GCSE - not the ordinary mundane General Certificate of Secondary Education that everybody in the country takes or talks about, but the General Certificate of Science fiction Education, only available to Novacon attendees.

To recap for old fans, and to inform the new, here's a brief outline of the quiz. In the Convention Book there will be a set of questions, with a separate answer paper. You will have until about 7.00 on Saturday evening to answer the questions and hand in your answer paper. The questions will be Multiple Choice (several answers will be given, from which you must choose the correct one). You will be able to select which quetions to answer - easy or hard ones - so whatever your knowledge of SF you have a reasonable chance of passing, and obtaining your Certificate (given to you on the Sunday). AND you will automatically be entered in a free prize draw.

In addition to General SF Knowledge questions there will be a set book to answer questions on, again multiple choice. We are telling you the name of the book now, so you can read it before Novacon. This ensures that everyone entering has an area of SF knowledge in common. The year the novel os Robert A Heinlein's *STRANGER IN A STRANGE LAND*, which became a cult novel to many non-SF fans in the '60s and '70s. So, if you haven't read it, read it, and if you have, then re-read it. It's a classic, and a fair number of questions will be based on it.

Finally, if you are hesitant about letting people know how good your SF Knowledge is, don't worry, names won't be made public unless you yourself tell someone.

P.S. If anyone who can write in Italics could spare a few minutes at Novacon to put names and dates on certificates please contact me, either at the BSFG meetings, or via Bernie Evans. Appreciation will be shown.

JACK COHEN - BY PETE WESTON

Jack Cohen is the "Mad Profesor" of SF fandom, our very own "Uncle Quentin" or, if you prefer, "Doc Brown" (he has the hair, too).

I think the first thing which impressed me about Jack was his phenomenal energy and enthusiasm. Imagine the scene, a summer evening in 1970, and I was quietly digging my little front garden in our first house at Kings Norton. Suddenly a battered brown 1100 drew up and a man emerged, a man with bushy white hair and baggy grey shirt, running across my lawn, waving his hands above his head and talking non-stop.

Within five minutes I found myself in the passenger seat, whizzing across Birmingham to meet someone named "Judy". I honestly still remember that feeling of bewilderment, of having been hustled - almost kidnapped - by this total stranger.

Well, it went on like that. Jack took me to the flat in Edgbaston where he was living at the time, and showed me various bits of rock, strange animals, MENSA handbooks, and a glimpse of a lifestyle somewhat different from anything I'd seen before. On that first occasion when Jack mentioned "Isaac", "John" (Campbell), and his friend Olga the Dolphin, I realised that a strange new presence was amongst us, and that fandom would never be quite the same again.

Apparently, it was all <u>my</u> fault.

You see, back in the mid-sixties I was publishing my fanzine, *Speculation*, and in a mood of optomistic enterprise I persuaded a city newsstand to take some copies, hoping to attract new readers. Guess who I caught - David Pringle, that's who, then living with his parents in Sutton Colfdield. This was during the Interregnum period when the Brumgroup had folded, Rog Peyton had given up SF, and for want of anything else, David and I (with another old pal, Bob Rickard), used to meet in the Temple Bar and talk science fiction every few weeks.

Several years later, David became Jack's research assistant at the University, where he discovered Jack's interests, mentioned my name, and sealed our fate!

I watched Jack's career develop with truly amazing rapidity. At the Worcester Eastercon in 1971 he brought along some, well, <u>interesting</u> creatures - including a thing with millions of legs (dubbed the "Mesklinite") which he let loose on the stage during the Fancy Dress Parade. It was here that he met Anne McCaffrey who became a bosom friend.

At the *Speculation* conference a few months later he met James Blish, established mutual rapport, and spirited him off into the University gardens at Winterbourne to discuss alien encounters.

Then came the first Novacon, the very beginning, and I have photographic evidence of Dr Jack Cohen giving the straight talk to our GoH, James White, until then known as a bit of an authority on peculiar aliens. That was before launching into the first of his own convention speeches on "Build an ET", which have subsequently become an institution in their own right.

We honoured Jack with the Chairmanship of the 1974 Novacon, the last at the old Imperial, and with good reason. This was the year we had a Banquet, so-called, in reality rubber chicken. This was the year that the "top table", so called, actually a trestle set up precariously on stage, collapsed, hurtling celebrities and the remains of dinner into an untidy heap. No fault of Jack's, but the sight of him standing there in the ruins with a distinctly puzzled expression, picking chicken bones from his wild mop of hair, would bring a smile to the sternest countenance!

I remember walks in the Lickey Hills, during which we saw strange fungii and assorted blobs which I'd never before noticed. That front gate, with the sign "Beware of snakes" - and those pythons which escaped under the floorboards, to the great alarm of the neighbours.

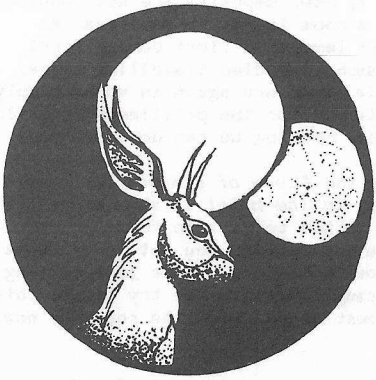
I started to visit Jack's room at the university, where pickled brains nestled in comfortable proximity to Larry Niven's paperbacks and Jack's own specialised books on human reproduction. He took me into the basement, where to the cry of "....and look at these beautiful cockroaches..." he thrust a handful of bifg, black, scuttling things under my nose.

Bur somewhere along the line I realised that I couldn't keep up. While I was writing fanzine articles, Jack was putting David Gerrold right on the Tribbles problem, helping Harry Harrison with his dinosaurs, designing dragons for Annie and aliens for Larry.

Jack introduced me to single malt whisky, to snakes, and to swimming at conventions (in the pool at the Heathrow Hotel, in 1978). He warned me about the dangers of overpopulation and the need to limit the size of my family (this was just after the birth of his fourth, but before he had his sixth).

And over the years Jack has continued with his adventures, giving his super talks at conventions, remaining as energetic and eccentric as ever, and somehow looking younger now then he did when I first met him, 20 years ago.

Give my regards to Olga, Jack!



HELP WANTED - BY NICK MILLS

The successful running of Novacon requires a large number of people. If you were one of the volunteers who contributed to the smooth running of Novacon 19 then once again you have my thanks.

This year, just as much as ever, we need convention members who are prepared to give a little of their time to contribute to everyone's enjoyment of the convention. If you haven't helped at a con before then let me assure you that it can be very enjoyable. The work is not too hard and it's a great way to meet other con-goers. We have work of all sorts from the physically active to sedentary. Previous experience is unnecessary but will always be welcome.

One time at which the convention needs all the help it can muster is during set-up on Friday. During the afternoon we need help in installing the dealers in the book room, and the artists in the art show, and we also need help to set up the main room as quickly as possible. If you are available to help, in this or any other capacity, on Friday afternoon or evening, then please inform me before the convention so that I know I can count on your assistance.

You can use section 6 of the membership application form to volunteer. (Gopher here is a catch-all term which covers all forms of duties). As usual the committee will show their appreciation of all those who do help, in the form of a small material reward.

THE HOTEL, FORMS, DIRE WARNINGS ETC..

BY BERNIE EVANS

You will find enclosed with this PR further membership and snooker forms, so if you've lost the last lot, or forgotten to send it back, or want to add something else, (such as answering Nick's plea for gophers! , then you can. If you don't need another set of forms, just throw them away!!.

You will also find THE HOTEL BOOKING FORM. Don't lose this, fill it in and sent it back NOW. One form per PERSON, particularly important if you're sharing a room. One form per room could mean the person who signs it picking up the entire bill, unlikely I know, but let's not chance it.

This year, you'll probably have realised by now, deposits are not required by the hotel, all you need to do to book a room is return the form. As usual, the rooms will be allocated more or less on a first come - first served basis, with the usual exceptions such as ladies travelling alone, people with small children etc etc. Single rooms are again in short supply, so those who insist on privacy may have to pay for the priviledge by having to be in the overflow hotel, there's really nothing we can do about that.

As usual, we must warn you about breaking the "*code of conduct for people who try to reduce the high cost of staying in the hotel by some means*". The hotel sells beds, booze and food, if you decide to go into competition with them you must be discreet about it. We're not telling you not to do these things, you're adults and can make your own decisions. We're just telling you the committee can't help if you get caught. However we try to put this we always end up upsetting someone, but most of you know the ropes by now, and we hope you understand.

OK, have a good time, see a bit of the programme, meet a lot of old friends, make some new ones, eat a little, drink a lot, see you there.

SOME MORE MEMBERS

091	Iain Banks	137	Peter Dunn
092	Robert Day	138	Paul Clough
093	John Steward	139	Lidia Plintschev
094	Mark Meenan	140	Geoff Cowie
095	Rhodri James	141	Chris Stocks
096	John Perry	142	Christopher Brooks
097	Chris Jennings	143	David Cochrane
098	Pat Brown	144	Helen McNabb
099	Freda Warrington	145	Peter Baker
100	Debbi Kerr	146	Mike Richardson
101	Simon Polley	147	Helen Clark
102	Chris Bell	148	Ken Slater
103	Jenny Glover	149	Joyce Slater
104	Ken Cheslin	150	Christina Lake
105	David T Cooper	151	Peter Thompson
106	Charles Sellers	152	Kay Allan
107	Anthony Smith	153	Michael Jones
108	Peter Day	154	Nick Larter
109	Ethel Lindsay	155	Arnold Akien
110	Keith Brooke	156	Tim Stannard
111	Alison Brooke	157	Chris Atkinson
112	James White	158	Storm Constantine
113	Peggy White	159	Ruth Oakley
114	Dave Cox	160	Claire Brialey
115	Ian Brooks	161	Noel Collyer
116	Barbara Kershaw	162	Moira Shearman
117	David Symes	163	John Philpott
118	Fay Symes	164	Andrew Armstrong
119	Brian Stovold	165	Helen Armstrong
120	David Bruce	166	George F Ternent
121	Rafe Culpin	167	Linda Ternent
122	John Brunner	168	Chris Smith
123	Bob Shaw	169	Ann Green
124	Michael T Day	170	Steve Green
125	Giulia De Cesare	171	Chris Ayres
126	Mark Reynolds	172	Stuart Borgognoni
127	Chris Amies	173	Andrew Stephenson
128	Melinda Young	174	Alison Weston
129	Barbara Cooper	175	Jean Sheward
130	Steve Jeffery	176	Susan Booth
131	Vikki Lee France	177	Neil Curry
132	John Fairey	178	Phil Race
133	Jonathan C Salmon	179	Nick Atty
134	M S Wilson	180	Stephen Atty
135	Philip Bell	181	Henry Newton
136	Tony Berry	182	Cherry Newton

AND A COUPLE OF CHANGES TO THE PREVIOUS LIST OF MEMBERS

052	James Garry	053	Larry Van Der Putte

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Information page by Steve & Alice Lawson, all articles by those named in the headings, all artwork by DAVE MOORING, whose name is in letters twice the normal size to make up for having no mention in PR1, and please accept our apologies, Dave

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